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# INPORT NEWS

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■ NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEM: Mayors to work on location

## New hospital proposed for south Niagara



JULIE JOCSAK QMI Agency Niagara

NHS supervisor Kevin Smith announces his recommendations for the health system at the Welland Hospital last Thursday.

ALLAN BENNER  
 InPort News Staff

WELLAND — A new acute care hospital could be built in south Niagara if the recommendations of the Niagara Health System's provincially-appointed supervisor are approved this summer.

"In addition to the St. Catharines site currently under construction, the NHS should construct a new general acute care hospital in south Niagara," said Kevin Smith, who has spent the past eight months developing plans for the future of most of Niagara's hospitals.

A new free-standing urgent care centre should be built in south Niagara as well to meet the needs of patients experiencing minor emergencies. Building those new facilities, however, would mean the closure of existing hospitals in Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Niagara Falls and Welland.

Smith will leave it up to south Niagara's mayors and Niagara

Region's chairman to decide on a location for those facilities, taking into consideration the population density and access.

"I know it won't be an easy task, but I believe that their interest in health care will provide us with some options that I hope will be unanimous," he said.

Despite the challenges, he felt it was prudent to give local political leaders "the first kick at the can" when it comes to locating the facilities.

"They live here, I don't," he explained.

If the mayors don't provide a recommended site, Smith said the NHS is well-prepared with population density, travel, distance and clinical data that would allow the NHS to present options.

"The mayors have been both complimenters and critics of the NHS legitimately, and I'd like to see the Niagara Region as united on this issue as possible."

see **NEW HOSPITAL** | page 2

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## ■ NEW HOSPITAL

# \$1.1B to renovate existing hospitals: Smith

## FROM PAGE 1

Although he estimated the cost of building the new hospital at about \$850 million, Smith said the NHS will need to spend about \$1.1 billion to renovate the existing hospitals. Meanwhile, the NHS would save as much as \$10-million a year as a result of the consolidation of services.

Smith publicly-released his 51-page interim report containing draft recommendations for changes to Niagara hospitals during meetings held Thursday at Welland hospital's auditorium with hospital staff, Niagara political leaders and media. It was the culmination of meetings with NHS staff ranging from housekeepers to physicians, Niagara's political leaders, community representatives and more than 1,000 e-mails he received from Niagara residents.

Smith is recommending the closure of the Niagara-on-the-Lake hospital as well. The

nurse practitioner-led walk in clinic and family health programs currently at that hospital would be relocated "to a suitable location within N-O-T-L with a much lower operating cost than the existing building," Smith said. Patients in complex continuing care beds at the existing N-O-T-L hospital would be relocated to other hospitals, he added.

But implementing the changes he's proposing won't be accomplished quickly.

"It's important to note that besides the minister accept these recommendations, it's obviously a multi-year project — a minimum of six years I believe," Smith said.

By mid-June, Smith will present a final report to the Ministry of Health for consideration. But first, his report will be open to public consultation, including a formal polling process.

"More than 1,000 Niagarans will be contacted by a professional polling agency to react

to the big picture recommendations — which is clearly the building of a southern site and the closure of the alternative sites."

**It's important to note that should the minister accept these recommendations, it's obviously a multi-year project — a minimum of six years I believe."**

*Kevin Smith, NHS supervisor*

The data from that poll will help inform the minister from a regional perspective, he said, adding people are also welcome to share their thoughts about the draft report by e-mailing him at nhsusupervisor@gmail.com.

The full report is available on line at this newspaper's website, as well as at [www.niagara-health.on.ca](http://www.niagara-health.on.ca).

Until a south Niagara new hospital is built, Smith said most acute care services at Welland and Niagara Falls hospitals will be maintained — although pediatrics and obstetrics services currently provided in Welland and Niagara Falls will be temporarily moved to St. Catharines. Once the new south Niagara hospital is built, Smith is recommending moving all obstetrics and pediatrics services to the new south Niagara hospital — including services currently being offered in St. Catharines.

He said moving all pediatric services to the new south Niagara hospital will allow the hospital currently nearing completion in St. Catharines to focus on cancer and cardiac services.

"Over the coming five to six year period, I'm convinced and

I believe the data supports this, the demand for cancer and cardiac will see that site challenged," he said. "I believe this is the right solution in terms of accommodating growth for cancer and cardiac while also ensuring continuity and integration for obstetrics and pediatrics."

As a result of anticipated concerns regarding consolidated obstetrics services, he's recommending the Local Health Integration Network explore the potential of establishing a low risk birthing centre in the region.

In-patient mental health services in Welland and Niagara Falls will be consolidated in the new St. Catharines hospital as well, although they will continue to be offered there following the construction of a new south Niagara hospital.

The NHS, however, will work towards addressing transportation needs for those patients, he added.

"While we don't have the solution to the vexing challenge of transportation in Niagara, we should address two particularly vulnerable groups — those are the frail and elderly and their families, and the chronically, seriously mentally ill."

He said the NHS will work with volunteer organization and agencies to make transportation arrangements particularly for seniors who are economically disadvantaged, or the families of mental health consumers who can't afford to pay for transportation.

In addition to facilities and services, Smith's report also focuses on NHS governance.

A new NHS board of trustees will also be formed, based on the recommendations of a community-based nominating committee comprised of a handful of Niagara residents who are "above reproach," and considered "outstanding people."

## ■ NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEM: Changes proposed by administrator

# Mayors tasked with determining location for a new hospital

MARYANNE FIRTH  
InPort News Staff

WELLAND — Let the discussions begin.

Collaboration will be key moving forward as south Niagara's mayors come together to determine the ideal location for a new hospital in the region's southern tier.

Kevin Smith, the provincially-appointed Niagara Health System supervisor, released his interim report last week containing draft recommendations for changes to Niagara hospitals.

Included was the key recommendation to build a new hospital, as well as an urgent care centre, in south Niagara, and to have leaders of the

region's southern municipalities decide where it should be built. The location recommendation is expected to be included in Smith's final report to the minister of health at the end of June.

"I know that there have been significant issues of trust around the NHS the past few years, and that's why I appointed Dr. Kevin Smith



Smith

steps necessary to restore

as supervisor," said Health Minister Deb Matthews in a prepared statement.

"He is taking the

trust. Few things are more important than ensuring that community members have confidence in their hospital," she said.

Smith has provided a "very comprehensive set of recommendations based on the consultation process," said Welland Mayor Barry Sharpe, who was pleased the consultation process

will continue in the coming weeks.

"The timelines are pretty tight on this," Sharpe said, eager to sit down and speak with councillors about the recommendations. The report will be sent to the city's health care committee for discussion.

see HOSPITAL | page 3

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# Portraits

■ **NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEM:** Physicians concerned about recommendations

## Report draws varied reactions

ALLAN BENNER  
InPort News Staff

**WELLAND** — Building a new hospital for south Niagara was welcomed as exciting news for several local physicians, but they remain concerned about several of the recommendations included within the report released by Kevin Smith.

Welland surgeon Dr. Peter Willard, Niagara South Medical Society president, said medical staff have been very supportive of the work being done by Smith, the Niagara Health System's provincially-appointed supervisor.

Smith's "big picture recommendation which is a south Niagara hospital, is strongly supported by all of us,"

Willard said.

"We understand there's a cost to that."

That cost, he added, is the closure of smaller hospital sites "that we've all become used to, and everybody is going to be equally inconvenienced with having to do a bit more travelling."

Port Colborne family physician Dr. Amanda Bell shared Willard's enthusiasm.

"I'm quite excited about the possibility of a south Niagara hospital," she said.

But some of the recommendations have also led to some questions and concerns from frontline workers, as well as some members of the communities.

"My worry is in the trade-offs, especially with a south Niagara urgent care centre

being mentioned," said Bell.

Smith's report recommends closing Port Colborne and Fort Erie's hospitals, along with

the rest of the region's hospitals with the exception of the new one nearing completion in St. Catharines, and replacing the urgent care centres at those two hospitals with one new free standing urgent care centre.

Bell doubts that new urgent care centre will be built in Port Colborne, based on population density.

"I think that would be dev-



Willard



Bell

asting to be honest," she said. "The urgent care centre is doing such a good job of providing the appropriate care for what

it's equipped for the people of Port Colborne. I'm terrified in terms of this new proposal just what it would mean for urgent care, given where we are and the lack of transportation."

She said Port Colborne-area residents need to have access "to 24-hour something."

"It doesn't mean 24-hour emergency rooms, but we need to have something that's

available for people who aren't sick enough to need ambulances but don't have access to transportation."

She'd also like Port Colborne residents to continue to have access to other services currently at the hospital like diagnostic imaging and laboratory services, at least during business hours. Meanwhile, she said specialists are currently visiting the hospital to lead clinics on general or orthopedic surgery, ear, nose and throat. She'd like room provided somewhere for those clinics to continue.

"If you can at least get initial assessments done in your community that makes a huge difference to access to care," she said.

The loss — even tempo-

orarily — of pediatrics and obstetrics services at Welland and Niagara Falls hospitals was an area of contention for some physicians. Smith recommended consolidating those services in the new St. Catharines hospital until the new south Niagara hospital is a reality.

Willard said the plan would merge the staff of three pediatrics and obstetrics departments, moving them from their familiar environments at the three existing hospitals to the new hospital in St. Catharines.

It would require "a lot of buy-in" from those staff members as well as the communities they serve to make that transition once.

see **HEALTH** | page 5

■ **HOSPITAL**

## Badawey: step in the right direction

FROM PAGE 2

Frank Campton, chairman of Welland health care committee, called Smith's recommendations "the only viable solution that we can find."

Sharpe called it "too early to respond," on the best approach to take to determine sites of the new facilities.

He questioned whether the tripartite committee, a group including representation from regional council, the NHS board and the Local Health Integration Network to review the implementation of the hospital improvement plan, would be issued to help address the issue of location.

The committee has fallen dormant since Smith's appointment.

"We have a lot to talk about," said Port Colborne

Mayor Vance Badawey, referencing the imminent discussions to be had in the coming weeks.

The new facilities, if approved, will not only serve



Badawey

Niagara better, but all of Niagara would be better by providing equitable access to health care, he said.

While it is a step in the right direction, Badawey stressed it is only a recommendation. Until it is approved by the minister, "all this is, is talk," he added.

Badawey said what he heard during Thursday's presentation was that "we're

going to continue with the status quo" for the time being — a concept he considers unacceptable.

Residents need to be given equitable access to health care in the interim, he said, believing Port Colborne has created a viable solution.

The city has brought forward a Clinical Services Plan model, which can be used region-wide, in a collaborative manner that integrates primary care with hospital restructuring.

There is a great need for collaboration to establish best practices to clinical pathways, Badawey said, and Port Colborne has taken on a leadership role to begin that collaboration.

The South Niagara Health Care Corp., he added, was established as a venue for that collaboration to take

place.

A meeting of the South Niagara Health Care Corp. has been set up for Monday beginning at 6:30 p.m. on the third floor of Port Colborne city hall. All are welcome to attend.

Wainfleet Mayor April Jeffs has already been contacted by seniors within the community who have indicated "it's prudent to keep the facilities we have and fix them up."

Smith's recommendation for a new facility, however, may be "fiscally better in the long run," she said.

Location of the new facility is "huge for Wainfleet," said Jeffs, adding she can see the issue being "problematic" when it's first brought to the table.

"The south is a big, vast area," she said, which means a location that satisfies every-



File photo

Port Colborne General Hospital

one may be hard to come by.

"We all know when we centralize services, no matter what kind of services, there are always some negative impacts," said Welland MPP Cindy Forster.

"Further consultation is needed and the government must not ignore the concerns of families in the Niagara region this time."

Forster encouraged resi-

dents to provide the input on the 51-page document.

"I appreciate Dr. Smith's approach," said Pelham Mayor Dave Augustyn, who was pleased additional input was being sought not only from local politicians but also from members of the community.

"This is different than we've experienced with the NHS before. It's a good sign."

# INPORT NEWS

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## ourview

# Pot and politicians combine to create stupid questions

One of the golden rules preached in journalism classes across our great land is this: There is no such thing as a stupid question.

Those who have actually graduated from journalism school, to say nothing of eighth grade, understand this to be a fallacy. There are plenty of stupid questions and reporters ask them every day.

Top of the stupid list is the "how do you feel" question. Journalists are eager to pose to grieving relatives and other victims of misfortune.

"How do you feel now that your loved is dead?"

It is the equivalent of stabbing someone repeatedly in the gut and asking if it hurts.

Anything that can be answered with "duh" is by definition a stupid question.

An aside: There are many legitimate questions of news and human interest value that can and arguably should be asked of grief-stricken survivors of even the most unspeakable tragedies. "How do you feel?" just isn't one of them. Running a close second on the interview idiot-meter is that newsroom favourite likely to be lobbed at anyone seeking political office: Have you ever smoked marijuana?

All questions that can be answered with the words "who cares" are by definition stupid questions.

B.C. Premier Christy Clark got the question last week and replied: "There was a lot of that going on when I was in high school and I didn't avoid it altogether." In political-speak that is a "yes."

A better answer would have been "who cares?"

According to a nationwide drug survey published by Health Canada, 44.5% of Canadians have tried cannabis at least once. Interestingly, Canadians use marijuana at a rate four times greater than the world average and, not surprisingly, most favour its de-criminalization.

Canadian leaders have tried pot. Finance Minister Jim Flaherty admitted it. Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty admitted it. The late Jack Layton admitted it and joked: "I never inhaled." Prime Minister Stephen Harper maintains he has never smoked marijuana or any kind of cigarette because he suffered from severe asthma. Believe it. Don't believe it. Who cares? Let's stop asking our politicians if they've smoked pot in the past.

Let's start asking: Are they smoking it now?

- Andrea Demeer, QMI Agency

## ■ I'VE BEEN THINKING

PASTOR GARY TOMLUCK  
Wainfleet Congregational Christian Church

In Matthew 27 verses 22-23 Jesus stands before Pilate who asks the crowd "What shall I do with Jesus?" They all answered "Crucify Him."

That is a timeless question and everyone must answer that question for themselves-What shall I do with Jesus?

You might very well say I didn't know I had to do anything with Jesus, so I would just do nothing. You might believe that if you had lived nearly 2,000 years ago and you were in that crowd, you would not have shouted "Crucify Him." You believe you are a very moral and outstanding citizen, or you may have acted like Pilate who washed his hands and said "I am innocent of this man's blood-it is your responsibility." Mt. 27:24. All of these statements are false-are you sure that you would not have shouted "Crucify Him, Crucify Him?" And are you sure that the pressure of the crowd would not have influenced you in that direction?

Adam and Eve could knowingly sin in the Garden of Eden, and the third of the angels in Heaven sinned in God's Home and in God's very presence way before sin was even heard of- do you think you would have stood steadfast and cried out to the crowds not Crucify Him but... release Him?

Secondly, no man, woman or child, is innocent of the Lord's blood. Jesus was the only one who was born, lived, died, and was resurrected without sin. He was and is the only innocent man

## readers' views

### WHERE ARE THE ENVIRONMENTALISTS?

The vocal and more extreme environmental activists are usually associated with left-rather than right-wing political parties and agendas and would mainly be seen as supporting either Dalton McGuinty or Andrea Horwath.

Both the Liberals and NDP have just agreed a deal to allow McGuinty's budget to go forward, including legislation giving private industrial wind and solar companies quicker access to approval for renewable energy projects. It also allows them same companies to ignore environmental protection laws. This bill effectively makes the entire rural area no

(God-man). And just as surely as Pilate said "It is your responsibility" it is the responsibility of everyone to accept or reject the Lord.

A decision must be made in this life. Hebrews 6 speaks of people who re-crucify the Lord. Many people do this today. How? Deciding that the crucifixion is no big deal...Deciding that the Lord's substitutionary death is nothing. Deciding that the Lord's supreme sacrifice was all in vain...Deciding to trample on the Lord's blood will not go unpunished.

No one can remain neutral or indifferent to the Lord's call for a Decision. The Lord draws a straight line in the sand and during His time people either followed Him or they picked up stones to throw at Him.

Pilate said, "Which of the two should I release-Barabbas or Jesus?" The former a notorious murderer-the latter the Author of Life. A decision was made to free the guilty Barabbas and to crucify the innocent Jesus. A decision was made by Judas to betray Jesus and He remained unforgiven. A decision was made by Peter to deny Jesus but He repented.

A decision was made by the Chief Priests, Scribes and the Pharisees with the shouting crowds to hand Jesus over to be Crucified. Jesus stood before Pilate and one day Pilate will stand before Jesus and be judged by Him as will everyone from paupers to princes there is no escape from final judgement. The ground is level at the foot of the cross. Please know that Jesus had done nothing wrong. His wife even said "he was an innocent man." But as

more than one enormous and potential industrial wasteland. The McGuinty government knew exactly what it was doing and Horwath knew what was in the legislation when she negotiated increasing taxation as a reason for the NDP support.

Another well known environmental activist who has remained silent is David Suzuki. It was reported recently he has resigned from the foundation that bears his name in order to be able to continue his frequent environmental harangues without interfering with the foundation's charitable status. He continues to insult anyone who disagrees with him whilst the foundation continues to claim tax paid funding. A win-win for the Suzuki's.

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# What shall I do with Jesus?

the crowds shout grow louder, Pilate lost control, washed His hands in water and said "I am innocent of this man's blood" Pilate caved into political pressure and remained unforgiven. No water can wash away our sins nor our guilty stains. There is only one thing and that is the worlds greatest stain remover and cleansing agent--The Blood of Christ, what can wash away my sin? Nothing But The Blood of Jesus.

Positive thinking will not wash away your guilty stains. Making resolutions will not wash away your guilty stains. Turning over a new leaf will not wash away your guilty stains. Nor will trying harder wash away your guilty stains. What will? Only the shed and precious Blood of the Lamb of God. There are only two Decisions. His Blood is upon us and our Children Mt. 27 vs 25 or our blood is upon the Lord in our guilt and His blood forgives us of our sins which must be received and accepted by us.

Which of the two -- Barabbas or Jesus? Crucify Him or receive His Forgiveness? Barabbas, the Scribes and Pharisees, even those who crucified the Lord and anyone today can be forgiven if they repent and confess their sin. For the Lord said "Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing."

Will you accept the free gift of salvation through your empty hands of faith and say "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to the Cross I cling." Do it now! None of us are innocent of this Man's Blood. Will the Lord's blood avail for you? It is your responsibility. This is your decision. What Will You Do With Jesus?

Only a week ago Suzuki was reported as joining the McGuinty government's Green Energy Agenda. I guess that means he also has no particular concern for endangered species and species at risk. Unless he has just not bothered to read the Bill 157.

All of you who continue to support this government's Green Energy agenda have now condemned many species to increasing harm and even extinction. I weep for the environmental destruction your narrow and wrongheaded demands will now bring to all of rural Ontario and the legacy you are condemning our children to.

Andrew Watts  
Wainfleet

## ■ HEALTH

# Recommendations concern some local physicians

## FROM PAGE 3

"Now you're asking them to do that again in six years when the new hospital in south Niagara is ready — that's going to be a tall order because it's a big, big deal to change that," he said. "I have some concerns about that and I will write to the supervisor about that," Willard added.

The current recommendation, Willard added, has left physicians with doubts that the pediatrics and obstetrics departments will ever be moved back to south Niagara.

"The big reason for that is the skill set. Once people are no longer exposed to pediatrics they lose their skill set and you can't just reinvent that."

Willard said an alternate would be to continue pediatrics and obstetrics at two sites, including at least one of the southern sites going.

He said that would result in some cost savings and improvement in coverage through a partial consolidation, but it would also mean less of a transition to ultimately consolidate the

obstetrics and pediatrics departments at the new south Niagara hospital.

Welland's pediatrician Dr. Peter

Bonsu plans to meet with other south Niagara pediatricians to discuss their concerns about Smith's

recommendation regarding the pediatrics amalgamation.

see **HEALTH** | page 6

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# Placing Old Age Security on a Sustainable Path

Canadians are living longer and costs for the Old Age Security (OAS) are rising. On April 1, 2023 the Government of Canada plans to start raising the age of eligibility for OAS and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) from 65 to 67.\*

## What does this mean for you?

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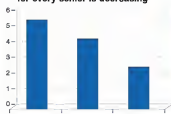
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\*\*Source: 9th Actuarial Report on the Old Age Security Program

*The number of working-age Canadians per senior is decreasing, placing additional pressure on the OAS program.*

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\*Subject to parliamentary approval

## ■ HEALTH

# Doubts about return of pediatric services

FROM PAGE 5

"Our medical staff here will be meeting and sending [Smith] a response." But he's very concerned about the issue.

"I don't think it's going to work," he said. "I don't think there's any money available to put up a new hospital in south Niagara."

Dr. S.M. Rau, a semi-retired pediatrician in Welland, said he too doubts that pediatrics services will ever return to south Niagara if it's removed.

By the time a new hospital is built, Rau said, "I'm sure everyone will have forgotten" about the initial recommendation to relocate pediatrics and obstetrics to the south Niagara facility.

Willard said there are a few other issues he hopes to address through future meetings with Smith, such as ensuring medical staff have input into hospital administration.

**"I don't think it's going to work. I don't think there's any money available to put up a new hospital in south Niagara."**

Peter Bonsu, pediatrician

"Where exactly is the physician and nursing input to the board?" Willard asked. "That hasn't been resolved."

He said it's great that community volunteer committees will nominate candidates for NHS board positions, but unless there is a continual feedback loop between the front-line workers and the system management, "there's going to be a problem again. How can you have a hospital without having input from the front-line providers?"

Willard said another issue is the lack of focus for the proposed south Niagara hospital.

He said plans to develop areas of expertise at the new hospital "are not very fleshed out."

"I'd like to hear a call from medical and nursing leaders to come up with a vision that can then be brought to the community."

Bell said she's hoping that some of the concerns can be addressed through the consultation process with Smith, before he submits the final report to Health Minister Deb Matthews in mid-June.

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**BELLY FAT TRANSFORMATION**

**As seen on Doctor Oz**

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## ■ COLUMN

# Scout and I

**D**og (n): A domesticated mammal that typically has a long snout and an acute sense of smell. Also known as man's best friend.

Dogs provide the greatest companionship a person could ask for.

Every dog has its own life purpose. Some are meant to help policemen when investigating a missing person's case. Others are meant to guide those who have impaired vision.

But most dogs are placed on this planet with no greater intention than loving its owner.

That's the kind of dog I had and he fulfilled his purpose to an extent that goes far beyond imaginable. He was a cross between a golden retriever and a black lab. His name was Scout.

Or Sir Woolfington III, as my sister sometimes called him.

Often times, people claim that they are not dog lovers. They can't imagine welcoming a four legged friend into their home without the mental image of it peeing on the hardwood floors or drinking from the toilet.

And yet through the excited greetings every time you enter the door to the wagging tail you get upon walking over to the cookie jar, dogs grow on people. And as soon as your heart opens itself to Rover (or Sir Woolfington III), there's no going back.



**Michelle Presse**  
CANADIAN GIRL,  
ITALIAN LIVING

Sometimes a person's love for their dog becomes so deep that they even let them sleep on their beds. And let's face it, at that point your heart is defeated and unconditional love has flooded your soul.

After 10 happy years, Scout passed away in August, just one month before I left for Italy. Although forever would never be long enough to have him in our life, cancer won the battle and took away my greatest companion.

I remember the first time driving home after we put our angel down. Although I knew he was gone, a part of me still expected to see him sitting on the porch like a good boy while wagging his tail. Before I finished my dinner, I subconsciously left the last bite of whatever was on my plate to sneak to him under the table.

When I woke up in the morning, I still thought he would sit beside me at the breakfast, waiting for me to finish my yogurt so he could lick the contents left in the container.

see **PRESSÉ** | page 10

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In fact, Immanuel treats his customers as extended family and says his happiness comes from serving only the best food to people he cares about.

"When I wake up in the morning, I'm happy to go to work," he says smiling. "For us, business isn't just about making money, it's about making friends and family. We prepare the food carefully, as we would cook at home for our own grandparents, parents and children."

The attention paid to customer satisfaction recently earned the Best Fish and Chips Award. The annual awards are given out to establishments that receive the most votes from the public.

Union Jack's reputation for great fish and chips drew crowds of loyal customers on Good Friday, with an astonishing 750 lbs of potatoes cut up for chips.

"Each year, Good Friday is very busy for us," said Immanuel. "We would like to thank our customers for coming here on Good Friday, and for voting us the best fish and chips again."

Union Jack's signature English Style fish and chips meal includes battered fish cooked until it's light, crispy and golden, and thick-cut fries made from fresh potatoes each morning.

With customers' health in mind, only the best oil is used for frying the fish and chips. The fish and chips meals also come with free creamy coleslaw, prepared fresh daily.



If you're in the St. Catharines area, Immanuel's wife Jessica owns another Union Jack on the corner of Carlton and Vine streets, and she would be happy to serve you the same quality of fish and chips.

To see Union Jack's complete menu, daily specials and new products visit [www.iloveunionjack.com](http://www.iloveunionjack.com). The website includes hours of operation and maps of both the Port Colborne and St. Catharines restaurants.

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■ **PRESSÉ**

## Puppy love

■ **FROM PAGE 8**

But he wasn't coming back. One thing I missed the most were the car rides. It wasn't the same driving through the country roads without his company, or the view of his head sticking through the window, enjoying the new scents and wind in

his face.

Although I have two cats, I had a feeling they wouldn't enjoy the rides as much as Scout did.

Dogs are the staple of a family, and the only living creatures on earth who will sit with you through your sadness without selfishness or judgment.

After the loss of a pet, one's heart becomes so heavy that the idea of ever adopting a new one seems impossible in fear of guilt for "replacement," and that you will never be able to love another pet like your last.

This feeling can only last for so long until you remember the saying, "A

home is not a home without a dog." I am happy to say that my family and I are adopting a yellow lab this June, whose name will be Samson. We are already arguing over who will love it the most, and although the pain of losing Scout is gone, the memories we had with him will last a lifetime.

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 CANADA

## ■ IAN THOMSON TRIAL

# Lawyer to challenge firearms storage regulations

MARYANNE FIRTH  
InPort News Staff

WELLAND — It was expected to be the third and final day of Ian Thomson's trial.

Before the case was adjourned on March 31, closing arguments had already begun.

But when court reconvened last week, it became apparent Thomson — on trial for two careless storage of firearms charges — was still months away from learning his fate.

Thomson's trial stems from an August 2010 incident, when his Port Colborne home was firebombed by four assailants launching Molotov cocktails and unleashing death threats.

Thomson, who was inside the home at the time of the attack, has previously admitted to firing three shots to ward off the attackers.

It's not sure of the gun that is at issue, however, but rather the storage of Thomson's firearms and ammunition that has been called into question.

During his closing argument on March 31, Crown attorney Bob Mahler cited case law and a section of the Criminal Code of Canada regarding the availability of ammunition in relation to firearms.

Thomson's lawyer Edward Burlew did not have the information at hand to defend against Mahler's position, and the case was adjourned to May 2.

On Wednesday, the courtroom was informed Burlew filed an application to challenge the firearms storage regulations.

Mahler said he expected only "an hour or two" would be needed to complete the matter.

But with the notice of application coming forward with intentions to "have the regulation struck down," Mahler said more time would be needed for the Crown to provide proper response.

The date of October 25, and tentatively Jan. 3 and Jan. 4 have been booked for the case to proceed.

Once the Crown has time to prepare its responding material, it will be in a better position to assess the time-

frame needed for the case moving forward, Mahler told Judge Tony Colvin.

The federal Department of Justice is now involved in the matter and will be providing assistance with the responding material, Mahler added.

Outside of the courtroom, Burlew said an application has been filed to "challenge the validity of the storage requirements for firearms."

It has been filed "based on the fact (the regulations) are vague and hard to understand," he said, adding they "unnecessarily impede a person's right to security of person."

Notice of application was given to both the provincial office of the Attorney General and the federal Department of Justice.

Both offices, Burlew said, have "decided to assist the local Crown here in supporting the regulation and in prosecuting Mr. Thomson."

The Chief Firearms Office, he added, will also participate in the prosecution.

"This is quite a serious development," Burlew said, "and the Crown is not intending, I'm told, to withdraw any of the charges."

The case will be before the courts on Oct. 17 to be spoken to, but presentation of evidence will begin on the Oct. 25 court date.

"It's a trial within a trial, a voir dire," Burlew said.

The Thornhill lawyer said it's still unknown whether the Department of Justice will send a federal lawyer or lawyers to argue the case on its behalf.

"This to me is a tremendous surprise," he said of the department's involvement.

If the regulation remains as is, it will stop gun owners from "having their gun at hand for self-defense," said Burlew.

"As long as the regulations are there and supported by the Department

of Justice federal law, any chance of concealed carrying is zero."

Burlew said his client wants to

move forward with the application "because he knows of its importance to the community and to firearms

owners in Canada."

"It's more than a personal fight," he added.

## Sexual Health • Heart Health

It's one of those ailments that no one wants to talk about, yet according to the American Medical Association, 43% of women and 31% of men suffer from sexual dysfunction. Sexual dysfunction is broadly defined as the inability to fully enjoy sexual intercourse. Women generally experience a loss of libido (sexual drive) and/or the inability or difficulty in achieving an orgasm. Men experience it as impotence, known as erectile dysfunction.

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## ■ LAKESHORE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

# School says thank-you to co-op employers

LINDSAY COSTELLO  
For InPort News

PORT COLBORNE — Education doesn't just happen in the classroom.

Lakeshore Catholic High School held a breakfast last week in honour of the local employers who helped make this year's co-operative educa-

tion program a success.

The buffet breakfast allowed students and employers to enjoy a meal prepared by Lakeshore's culinary students and mingle. They also heard from student speakers and browsed the projects the students created to reflect on their experiences.

"It's a small token to our

employers to say thank you," said Margaret Benko, co-operative education teacher, of the breakfast, which lasted about an hour.

This year, 39 employers opened their doors to Gators looking to obtain insight into the workforce while earning school credit.

Seventy-five students par-

ticipated in the program, which has seen increased interest, as it is now available during to night and summer school students as well.

Benko said the co-op program is beneficial for students as it gives them a taste of the workforce and a chance to show off their skills.

"It gives them a competitive

edge," she said, adding it gives employers a chance to see what the students are capable of and that as a result students have been offered apprenticeships or were encouraged to return should they choose to do another placement.

Principal Dan DiLorenzo said co-operative education has allowed the school to build

partnerships within the community and has allowed students to obtain skills they may not have learned otherwise.

"Thank you to all of the businesses for taking our students and providing them with this experience," he said.

"This is a form of learning that can't happen in the classroom."

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■ **LAKESHORE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL:** Happy Days had on Port school stage

# Richie and the Fonz set to take the stage

LINDSAY COSTELLO  
For InPort News

**PORT COLBORNE** — Happy Days are here to stay. Lakeshore Catholic High School keeps the spirit of the 50s alive as excitement mounts over the school's spring production.

It debuted last night with repeat performances May

11 to 13, Happy Days The Musical uses song and dance to recreate events depicted in the popular 1970s television program of the same name. All of the classic characters will come to life as the town bands together to save its local diner, Arnold's, after learning it is set to be demolished.

"It's progressing well," said

Rosalyn Aliberti, co-ordinating director, of the show that has been in the works since November and follows 2010's Footloose.

With the addition of costumes and the completion of sets designed by the construction technology and art students, the cast has been able to visualize the final product and see the big pic-

ture as they prepare for their curtain call.

A team of staff directors has led about 40 students who are working to polish the song and dance numbers that will make up the two-act play.

Evan Leitich, who portrays the Fonz, and Jake Charlebois, who plays Richie Cunningham, are Grade 11

students making their stage debut this year.

"This whole experience has been fantastic," said Leitich of his first time as a performer. Although he is portraying a character from another era, Leitich said the characters are relatable and by watching episodes of the show and practising his role, he was better able to capture the

mood.

Charlebois enjoys transforming into a new character and interacting with the other cast members to improve his performance.

"It's a lot easier to work off each other's creativity," he said, adding he enjoys the social aspect of the musical that led he and Leitich to become friends.



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**FOR OUR ANNUAL CHARITY BBQ AT ALL M&M MEAT SHOPS LOCATIONS.**

"I am proud to help raise money for Crohn's and colitis research by helping out at M&M Meat Shops Charity BBQ Day!"

— Lindsay England, co-chair of Crohn's disease

**SAVE \$3.00!**

When you spend \$30 on CHARITY BBQ DAY, you'll receive a coupon for \$3 off your next \$30 purchase in May!

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 Arcuri's Cheese World - Welland

## inPortbriefs

### RUGBY ROUNDUP

**PORT COLBORNE** - Stoney Creek won the half that counted in exhibition men's rugby action Saturday at Niagara Wasps Field.

Niagara's first team took a 24-5 lead into the final half but couldn't contain a Stoney Creek comeback and had to settle for a 29-29 tie with an undermanned visiting squad.

Zac Allen, with two; Paul Henri Van Thiel, Jay Peterson and Travis Pufpaff scored

trys for the Wasps and Jake Summerell converted two of four conversions.

Ian Hunter scored the lone try for Niagara's second team in a 20-5 loss to Stoney Creek.

First teams played two 30-minute halves and second teams played a 40-minute game as Stoney Creek was short of players for the Wasps' third, and final, game of the pre-season.

Niagara's regular season kicks off Saturday in home

games against Barrie.

### CHARITY TOURNAMENT

**WAINFLEET** - Golfers have until Wednesday, May 30, to register for the sixth annual Enno's Children's Charity Golf Tournament.

An event that has raised more than \$30,000 for national children's charities over the last five years will be played Sunday, June 9, at Port Colborne Golf & Country Club. Registration begins at 11 a.m.

with a shotgun start set for 1 p.m.

Cost if \$130 per golfer, which includes 18 holes of golf and a buffet dinner, or \$30 for dinner only.

Contact Nathan Gatt at 905-834-8228, ext. 4, or by e-mail at [ngatt@ecogeco.ca](mailto:ngatt@ecogeco.ca) or Christina Renshaw, 905-834-4464, [christinarenshaw@gmail.com](mailto:christinarenshaw@gmail.com) for more information.

continued on page 15

**Arthur Atwill Memorial**  
**WOOF Golf Tournament**  
 for the Welland & District SPCA

**Sunday, May 27, 2012**  
**Whisky Run Golf Club**  
**Port Colborne**

**EARLY BIRD DRAW!!**  
 Register by May 6<sup>th</sup> to win one of five  
**Golf 'n' Ride 18-holes for 2**

**18 HOLES = 11:00 a.m.**  
 \$85 - or - \$60 for Whisky Run Members  
 Riding Cart is included with 18 holes

**9 HOLES = 1:30 p.m.**  
 \$55 - or - \$35 for Whisky Run Members

**BBQ DINNER = 5:00 P.M.**  
 Registration Deadline May 18<sup>th</sup>

**FEATURING**

- Men's, Ladies, & Mixed Divisions - regular 4 person scramble format
- Awards, draws, gift for every player!
- MC: Brian Salmon from **DAVE'S 317**

In honour of Mr. Arthur Atwill, his vision and sincere dedication to help the animals, all proceeds to the Welland & District SPCA serving Welland, Haldimand, Peiham, Port Colborne, Wainfleet & West Lincoln

**YOUR SUPPORT WILL SAVE LIVES ... THANK YOU!!**  
 Donor cheques to be made payable to the Welland & District SPCA

**INFORMATION & REGISTRATIONS AVAILABLE FROM:**  
 Whisky Run Golf Club  
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 ProStyle Flooring (Marsha Watts)  
 • 905-835-1243  
 Welland & District SPCA  
 • 905-735-1552

## inPortbriefs

### FROM PAGE 14

#### SEASON UNDERWAY

**PORT COLBORNE** — Adam Nicholls held off defending champion Greg Haegens in the Niagara Auto Sales pro 4 trucks division for his first-ever racing victory at New Humberstone Speedway.

Lee Sleight finished third on Friday night's season opener at the Port Colborne track.

Gary Lindberg edged defending champion Brad

Rouse in the first Cosco Haulage DirtCar sportsman feature of the 2012 season with Cody McPherson defeating brother-on-law Brandon Casey in the battle for third place.

Darren Peters had a wire-to-wire win over his son Jordan and Adam Sixt in the Peters Excavating FASTRAk late model division, while Paul Reichel set the pace in the J & C Auto street stocks with his first victory since 1997. Jason Fontaine and Barry Blanchard rounded out the top three.

Finishing in the money in the Weekend Motorsports mini stocks feature were Brandon Iudiciani, Rocco Conte and Rob Overholt. Sam Ittody, Kyle Rothwell and Leroy Buscomb finished 1, 2, 3 in the Frontier Auto Dismantlers pure stock division.



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## ■ ENVIRONMENT

# Green addition at St. John Bosco

MARYANNE FIRTH  
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE  
— "Treeees!"

It was a fitting replacement for the ode to frumage usually declared in front of a camera.

With hands and boots cov-

ered in mud, and big smiles splashed across their faces, students at St. John Bosco Catholic School posed for photos around the many new

trees planted in their schoolyard last week.

The latest green additions came courtesy of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation

Authority, which funds the greening of schoolyards through its Canopies for Kids program.

St. John Bosco was one of

10 schools selected to receive 25 trees each through the program this year.

See ENVIRONMENT | page 17

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## ■ ENVIRONMENT

# Students eager to plant trees

FROM PAGE 16

Following work at the Port Colborne school on Friday, where native maple, oak, sycamore and tulip trees found new ground, NPCA staffers headed over to St. Elizabeth Catholic School in Wainfleet for the day's second round of planting. Schools can apply

for the program annually in January.

Students are asked to help with the planting process — a task they're often eager to take on, said NPCA stewardship program assistant Kelly Royer.

For the trees a little too big for small helping hands to

tackle, Gauld Nurseries steps in to assist.

"We want kids to do part of the work so they take ownership of the trees and act responsibly around them," Royer said while supervising a group of shoveling youngsters.

But before any soil is turned, the NPCA makes

it a point to present to their groups of young planters information to help them understand the benefits trees provide and their role in the environment, she added.

"It means a lot to the kids," said teacher Lisa MacPherson, who applied for the program on behalf of the school.



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## inPortbrief

### HOSPITAL FOUNDATION TO HOST GOLF CLASSIC

PORT COLBORNE — Port Colborne Hospital Foundation holds its 18th Annual Golf Classic at Port Colborne Country Club on Wednesday, May 30. Registration starts at 11 a.m. and

a shotgun start at 1 p.m. The cost to sign up is still \$130 per person which includes golf with cart, a lunch of chicken or sausage plus the extras. In the evening there will be

appetizers before a prime rib dinner. Each golfer will receive a very nice golf gift in appreciation for their participation. In addition, their will have a great assortment of raffle items, a live auction and half a half draw. This event has been a major fund raiser for the foundation and last year raised \$16,700 with which to purchase the much needed equipment for the hospital. The total financial commitment of the foundation for this fiscal year is in excess of \$120,000. There is no government

funding for equipment and the money must come from people in the community through various events (such as the golf classic), memorial donations, bequests or general donations.

Please consider joining for the fun day or make a donation for the raffle table or sponsor a sign with your business name on it for \$125. The foundation office number is 905-834-4501 Ext. 32126 or email Debbie Spraggett, office manager dspraggett@niagarahospital.on.ca



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### May 11<sup>th</sup> - May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012



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## ■ PASTA FOR PLAYGROUND



Supplied photo

Winger Public School held a pasta dinner on April 26 to raise funds for its school playground. Volunteers from the school and the community helped prepare the meal.

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## ALONG THE LAKESHORE

### SATURDAY, MAY 12

Friends Over 55 holding an indoor flea market at 554 Fielden Ave. from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Refreshments, BBQ, etc.

### THURSDAY, MAY 17

The Port Colborne Art Club's annual Art Show and Sale will be held from noon to 5 p.m. at the Bethel Community Centre, 2703 Chippawa Rd. East. The event features the work of local artists, a bake table and door prize, desserts and refreshments. Admission is \$7.

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27

Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce's annual golf tournament will be held at Port Colborne Country Club. Call the chamber at 905-834-9765 and sign up to be a player, sponsor a hole on the course, or donate a golfer prize. Register by June 13.

### FRIDAY JUNE 15

Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce's 17th annual Lobster and Laughs fundraiser at the Sugarloaf Marina Pavilion. Tickets are now on sale at the chamber office. \$60 p.p. Includes HST. Call the chamber at 905-834-9765 to purchase your tickets today.

### ONGOING AT BRIDGES COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

**CAREGIVER SUPPORT NETWORK:** If you are caring for a loved one and are feeling stressed out, or in need of some personal support, drop-in to our monthly caregiver support network the second Friday of every month from 1:30-3p.m. No registration required. Call 289-479-5017 ext. 2421 for more info or to register. Held at Bridges CHC 177 King St. Port Colborne.

**CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT SUPPORT GROUP:** A monthly drop-in support group for people living with chronic pain. The

group runs the last Friday of every month from 1:30 to 3 p.m. No registration required. Call 289-479-5017 ext. 2421 for more info or to register. Held at Bridges CHC 177 King St. Port Colborne.

**COFFEE AND A CONVERSATION™ SOCIAL GROUP:** A new weekly drop-in social group for adults of any age. Drop in for a coffee, a conversation, and meet new friends! The group runs every Thursday, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. No registration required. Call 289-479-5017 ext. 2421 for more info or to register. Held at Bridges CHC 177 King St. Port Colborne.

**QUIT SMOKING GROUP PROGRAM:** Thinking about quitting smoking? Join our "You Can Quit" program and learn how to quit for good. Five week supply of nicotine replacement therapy available to eligible participants. The program will be held on Wednesday, May 23 and 30, 6 to 7:30 p.m. Please call to register, space is limited. Call 289-479-5017 ext. 2421 for more info or to register. Held at Bridges CHC 177 King St. Port Colborne.



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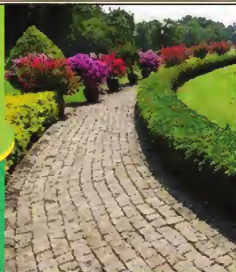


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will only be responsible for any debts incurred by myself after March 25, 2012.

## Legal Notices

### LEGAL NOTICES

#### NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND OTHERS

Claims against the Estate of **JOSEPH PETER GRETTHER**, late of Port Colborne, in the Province of Ontario, who died on the 7th day of January, 2012, must be in our hands by June 8, 2012, after which date the assets of the Estate will be distributed.

Geoffrey Alan Tunton, Estate Trustee, by his solicitor  
**WILSON, OPATOWYCH**  
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## ■ PRESCRIPTION DRUG-OFF

## Take back your drugs

■ MARYANNE FIRTH  
InPort News Staff

**WELLAND** — Danger could be lurking in your medicine cabinet.

The little orange bottles may seem harmless — after all, they're legal, were prescribed by a medical professional and even health officials provided relief from illness at some point — but they pose a significant risk if used improperly.

To help avoid prescription drug misuse in the area, Niagara Region public health is teaming up with Niagara Regional Police, Ontario Provincial Police and Public Safety Canada to have a prescription drug drop-off day at several locations across the region.

On Saturday, May 12, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., people will be able to drop off their old and unused medications — no questions asked.

"I have to stress that this

is anonymous," said health promoter and event organizer Erin McGinnis. Names on removed can be blacked out or removed from bottles altogether, or for those more comfortable with the alternative, just the drugs without the bottles can be turned in.

"We won't be able to tell whose is whose," McGinnis said, encouraging people to participate without hesitation.

Each drop-off station will act as a drive-thru with people passing their prescription drugs over without getting out of their vehicles.

The pills that are collected will be categorized by pharmacists as narcotics and non-narcotics, to help weigh reasons of the day, then taken to a waste disposal site in Brampton where they will be incinerated.

While the event is meant to rid homes of old medications, it also aims to raise awareness surrounding the

growing problem of prescription drug misuse in the region, McGinnis said.

"This is about safety. Your own safety, your kids' safety," she said, citing the health risks people may encounter if they take a drug prescribed for someone else.

The 2011 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey indicates 20.8% of high school students in the Niagara, Hamilton, Hamilton-Norfolk and Brant areas report using prescription drugs for non-medical purposes in the past year.

Those youth indicate they've taken the drugs from their own homes because of easy access, McGinnis said.

To help halt this growing issue, precautions should be taken to ensure drugs don't fall into the wrong hands, either by locking them up or returning unused doses to a local pharmacy.

## ■ SPORTS

## athletes' food for thought

■ BERNI FRANK  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — Turns out, mom was right all along: You're not eating right if you skip breakfast and scrimp on vegetables.

Making sure to drink plenty of water each day and getting a good night's sleep is equally important, just like she said.

While a balanced diet, proper hydration and needed rest should go without saying, Matt Nichol finds he has to say it repeatedly. Even the professional athletes the one-time Toronto Maple Leafs strength and conditioning coach works with nowadays as a personal trainer have to be reminded that supplements are just that — supplements to the

nutrients they should already be getting in their food.

"Before you worry about spending \$50 on a bottle of pills, think about what you're eating," said Nichol, who called supplementation something that isn't there in the first place "like putting spiciness and racing wheels on a car when there's no gas in the tank."

Nichol addressed student athletes about proper training and conditioning during a Tuesday visit to Lakeshore Catholic High School. Though he is vice-president of product development for Boosted Sports Supplement, his presentation didn't include a sales pitch.

In fact, the personal trainer told Lakeshore students and coaches that they are the ones who won't even begin discussing

supplements with their clients until after he gets a five-day "food diary" of what they eat.

"Real food is better than supplements all the time, that's why proper nutrition is important to athletes in their training."

Nichol, who was invited to speak at Lakeshore by vice-principal Andrew Boon, his one-time teammate on the McGill University football team, said supplements sometimes are necessary.

"Before games, some people can't digest food. They just can't keep it down," he said in an interview afterwards.

Supplements can also be beneficial to athletes who are more comfortable on the field, convinced that they are in the kitchen making meals.

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